N.H. Room -- Lateral File

One teen's dad kept boys from running

By Linda Bean
Eagle-Tribune Writer

EXETER, N.H. — The day their boys were arrested, the parents of a two teens involved in a murder sat down and wept together.

"Our parents were crying over at JR's house," Patrick "Pete" Randall testified yesterday. "We just knew what was going to happen."

Mr. Randall, 17; Vance "JR" Lattime, 18, and William Flynn, 16, have all pleaded guilty to the murder of Gregory Smart.

Testimony yesterday indicated the boys are in prison now because one father gave the murder weapon to police and another refused to let the boys run.

Vance Lattime Sr. told the jury yesterday he learned from Ralph Welch that his gun may have used in Mr. Smart's murder.

Mr. Welch "is real good friends with my son and he's more or less a son to us," Mr. Lattime said.

On June 10, Mr. Welch, who had lived with the Lattimes for nearly three years, told Mr. Lattime that the gun — a .38-caliber snub-nosed revolver — was used in a crime.

"He was almost hysterical," Mr. Lattime said. "He said Bill and Pete were in the process of a burglary or a robbery ... a guy came in and they may have killed him. He said JR ... drove.

> **"He said Bill and Pete were in the process of a burglary or a robbery."**
>
> **Vance Lattime Sr.**

"I told the wife I was taking the gun to the police station."

It was the first break in the case. The gun was later proven to be the weapon that killed Mr. Smart.

The same day, the boys fled to Connecticut in the Randalls' family car, Mr. Randall testified. They were going to steal motorcycles and escape.

Their plan was cut short by Mr. Randall's father, Frank. He tracked the boys down and told his son "to have the car back by 9:30 p.m. or he would report it stolen and have us arrested by the Connecticut State Police," Mr. Randall said.

The boys brought the car back. They were arrested the following night, after their mothers drove them to the police station.

Folder: Smart Murder Trial
Source: Eagle Tribune
Item:
Date: 3/7/91